

Democracy in Peril?

Leadership Challenges in a Time of Crisis

Civic Engagement & Leadership Development

SPRING 2022 Civic Leadership Seminar

CUNY School of Labor & Urban Studies

SATURDAY, MARCH 5, 2022 – 10am - 12pm (U.S. Eastern Time)

Session 1:

“Pivotal Movements at Pivotal Moments: Reconstruction, the Second Constitution and Today’s Struggle to Save American Democracy”

Presenter:

Daniel Rosenberg - Professor of Social and Labor History, Adelphi University

Session Description:

In this session, Professor Rosenberg will share how history can provide insight into our present-day challenges.

Discussion Questions:

How can the major systemic transformations following the Civil War – namely the abolition of slavery and the inclusion of former slaves in voting and governance – guide us in deciding what our current reform priorities to repair democracy should be?

Recommended Reading:

dropbox.com/s/yt4xg2wi6fpx6co/SESSION-1_Pivotal-Movements_Pivotal-Movements_Questions-Readings.docx?dl=0

SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 2022 – 10am - 12pm (U.S. Eastern Time)

Session 2:

“Three Questions Searching for Answers: Where Do We Go From Here? Where Are We Today? What Must We Do to Get from Here to There?”

Presenters:

Clarence Lusane - Political Science Professor, Howard University

Alethia Jones - Director of Fellowships, Open Society Foundations

Gerry Hudson - Secretary-Treasurer, Service Employees International Union

Session Description:

This session will consider the question Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. raised in his acclaimed book, *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?* in debating whether we are closer to building community or descending into chaos.

Discussion Questions:

How can we apply this vital question to key movements for economic justice, health care for all, racial and gender equality, labor rights, and voting rights?

SATURDAY, MARCH 19, 2022 – 10am - 12pm (U.S. Eastern Time)

Session 3:

Political Transitions and Opportunities: the Power of Coalition-Building

Presenter:

Eve Baron - Chair, Pratt Institute Graduate Center for Planning and the Environment; Member, New York City Civic Engagement Commission

Lacey Tauber - Legislative Director, Office of Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso

Paula Z. Segal - Senior Staff Attorney, [TakeRoot Justice](#) Equitable Neighborhoods

Session Description:

The presenters for this session will examine the current opportunities for coalition-building in NYC communities involving unions, worker organizations, social justice movements, youth and students, as well as city, state, and federal elected officials.

Discussion Questions:

What are some key lessons from the successes and shortcomings from recent experience of community-based, issue-focused, labor-community, and electoral coalition-building efforts?

SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 2022 – 10am - 12pm (U.S. Eastern Time)

Session 4:

“Building Worker Power: Organizing for Victories in the Workplace, Communities, and 2022 Midterm Elections”

Presenter:

Lucia Gomez - Political Director, New York City Central Labor Council

Session Description:

Lucia Gomez will survey several examples of how innovative approaches to collective bargaining have mobilized community support and transformed these efforts into innovative multi-issue labor-community mobilizations for worker rights and social justice.

Discussion Questions:

What can we learn from innovative collective bargaining efforts such as the "bargaining for the common good" approach that powered successful teachers' strikes in Chicago and Los Angeles and is influencing other organizing around the country?

SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 2022 – 10am - 12pm (U.S. Eastern Time)

Session 5:

“Legislative Activism and Activist Legislators: Enacting Progressive Public Policy, Addressing Constituent Issues, & Winning Elections in 2022 and Beyond”

Presenter:

Stefani Zinerman - New York State Assembly Member, 56th Assembly District

Session Description:

In this session, NYS Assemblywoman Stefani Zinerman – a CELD alum – will discuss how legislators can translate the labor and community activism of New York communities into legislative activism.

Discussion Questions:

What are some of the best examples in recent history of labor & community activists successfully teaming with activist legislators?